

William Walker: The Filibuster Who Dreamed of a Slave Empire

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I. Introduction

William Walker: “Shy and taciturn, ascetic, sand-haired and freckled, five feet five inches tall and weighing less than 120 pounds, his only distinctive feature was a pair of luminous, transfixing, grey-green eyes”.¹ How a man of such peculiar stature captured the imagination of a whole country is truly remarkable. However, Walker seemingly accomplished the impossible when in 1855 “with a band of fifty-eight recruits from San Francisco, he was able to seize control of the government of Nicaragua”.² William Walker was a filibuster, one of the “adventurers taking part in forays against friendly nations to foment revolution or capture”.³ During the 1850s, hundreds to thousands of these filibusters poured into Central America fighting in various conflicts. Walker became a media sensation overnight all over the United States. According to the Virginian newspaper *The Spirit of Jefferson*, Walker was “the flag of rational liberty, and pointed out with his sword the pathway of progress and prosperity”.⁴ It was not long until Walker’s sinister intentions became very clear, as he wrote “to bind the Southern States to Nicaragua, as if she was one of themselves” he reestablished slavery in the country, which for thirty-two years prior had been outlawed.⁵ After he was ousted from power in 1857, Walker would garner enough support mostly from Southern sympathizers for three more filibustering expeditions into Central America until he was executed in Honduras in 1860.⁶

Walker’s spotlight in the American public eye may have been short-lived, but his legacy and ideology lived on. Walker believed in order to save “Southern society” from the growing abolitionist threat, the South must “break through the barriers which now surround her on every

¹ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York 1988: Oxford University Press), 110-111.

² Amy S. Greenberg, “A Gray-Eyed Man: Character, Appearance, and Filibustering,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 20, no. 4 (2000): 673.

³ Charles H. Brown, *Agents of Manifest Destiny: The Lives and Times of the Filibusters* (Chapel Hill 1980: University of North Carolina Press), 3.

⁴ *Spirit of Jefferson*. [volume] (Charles Town, Va. [W. Va.]), 02 June 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026788/1857-06-02/ed-1/seq-2/>>.

⁵ William Walker, *The War in Nicaragua. Written by Gen'l William Walker*. (Mobile 1860: S. H. Goetz & co), 266.

⁶ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 673-674.

side”.⁷ To Northerners this meant Walker intended to “create new slave states out of ‘redeemed’ territory” — however, Walker’s true desire was to reforge slavery’s destiny outside the Union.⁸ I will be using both Northern and Southern newspapers of the period to understand the sectional divide on the actions of Walker, “one of the key cultural icons of the 1850s”.⁹ To delve deeper into the mind of Walker, I will also be examining his memoir *The War in Nicaragua*, an account of his expeditions in Central America.¹⁰ Through the use of these primary sources, I will argue that William Walker and his filibusters were not motivated by the desire to librate those deprived of American democracy, but the desire to plant the seeds of slavery — a cruel, racist, and immoral system — to secure that the Southern way of life would be sustained outside the confines of the Union and prevail against a ever growing tide of Northern anti-slavery rhetoric.

II. Primary Sources

Established by the Library of Congress, Chronicling America is a database of American newspapers with over seventeen million papers from 1789-1963 across all fifty states and territories. I narrowed my search to the years 1856-1860, the years William Walker was active in his expeditions. What interested me most was the reaction to Walker’s exploits after his decree of slavery, specifically any differences between Northern and Southern reactions. As these newspapers acted to provide reporting on what was transpiring in Nicaragua while also providing the editor’s opinion on these events. In terms of tone and language, these two groups are vastly different in their views of Walker and his decree of slavery. These newspapers reflect the sectional rift between the North and the South regarding the issue of filibusters and the institution of slavery.

⁷ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 266.

⁸ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 676.

⁹ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 674.

¹⁰ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 1-432.

The other source I utilized was William Walker's memoir *The War in Nicaragua*, published in 1860. This book was Walker's account of his filibustering expeditions in Nicaragua and his grasp on power within the country. Here, he details his views on race, the differences in the colonies of England and Spain, the anti-slavery movement in the United States, the South, commerce, and the future of slavery in the Western Hemisphere. This memoir's purpose was a call to all able-bodied Southerners to take up the call to join Walker's next expedition into Central America. Walker's dream of creating a chattel slave labor-centered state in Central America comes to fruition in *The War in Nicaragua*.

III. Methodological Problems

Characteristics

These seven newspapers cover a vast geographical area of the United States, including Ohio, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New York, Louisiana, Virginia, Maryland, and South Carolina. The papers serve two purposes for their audiences. One was to factually report the events that transpired in Nicaragua. The other, woven into these reports, is to convey the dominant thoughts and political philosophies in each region regarding Walker and his filibusters. Walker's *The War in Nicaragua* serves an underlying purpose: to allure "The hearts of Southern youth" to his filibustering cause.¹¹ Walker had led three expeditions into Nicaragua and all had failed, and upon his fourth attempt in 1860 his "act was growing stale" to the public.¹² To stimulate excitement again, Walker wrote of the "peril and jeopardy" that "Southern civilization" was facing if Nicaragua was to remain slave-free and out of American hands.¹³

¹¹ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 278.

¹² McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 115.

¹³ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 280.

Cultural Production

I found many newspapers reporting on events transpiring in Nicaragua went through multiple channels before their stories were ever printed. Accessing these newspapers through the online database without being able to physically hold them created my first filters of the digitization of my sources. Due to the distance between Central America and the United States, information reaching the press can take weeks or even months at a time. Readers would be receiving outdated reports of Walker's activities where the situation could have drastically changed in between this time. These newspapers name only the editors and proprietors of the paper as writers which also casts doubt on the authenticity of these accounts. Editors obtaining this information from correspondents have absolute control over what to include or not in their papers. I was not reading what originally happened but the editor's own personal perspective.

Walker's *The War in Nicaragua* is also full of filters blurring the line between fact and fiction. Walker wrote this book "almost entirely from memory" two years after his last filibustering expedition.¹⁴ This is a totally unreliable narrative as Walker is only relying on how he interpreted these events not how they occurred. As an autobiography written for the intent of convincing others to join his cause, Walker portrays himself as a savior of a country in desperate need of one. Walker's views on race play into a portrayal of the Nicaraguans as inept and incapable of running a country, suggesting Walker and his filibusters needed to intervene. The publisher of Walker's book, S. H. Goetzl & co., was based in the heart of the cotton industry in Mobile, Alabama. A Southern publisher would demand a pro-Southern/slavery narrative to garner to their audience deep in the cotton kingdom. These idealist beliefs warp this book into

¹⁴ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 429.

pro-Southern propaganda to convince young men of the South to march down to Nicaragua for a purpose greater than themselves.

Challenges

I ran into various challenges when viewing the digitized primary resources. Many of the newspapers had significant physical damage, with parts of the text blurred or even missing. In addition, the sheer number of newspapers in the Chronicling America database made the process of finding relevant papers for my research labor intensive. The memoir, provided through the University of Michigan's digitized library, shows signs of careless previous owners and features many pages lined with notes and annotations. This results in many paragraphs being unreadable and full of extraneous content to decipher.

Choices

I chose four newspapers from across the North that reflect popular opinion in the region regarding filibustering and slavery at the time: *The Anti-Slavery Bugle*, *New York Herald*, *Orleans Independent Standard*, and *Union County Star and Lewisburg Chronicle*.¹⁵ I also picked three newspapers from the South displaying a pro-slavery, sympathetic view of Walker and his cause: *The Spirit of Jefferson*, *The Independent Press*, and *The Daily Exchange*.¹⁶ I grouped these newspapers by their sectional allegiance because of their similar patterns in language, tone,

¹⁵ *Anti-slavery bugle*. [volume] (New-Lisbon, Ohio), 11 April 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83035487/1857-04-11/ed-1/seq-1/>>; *The New York herald*. [volume] (New York [N.Y.]), 21 Oct. 1856. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313/1856-10-21/ed-1/seq-4/>>; *Orleans independent standard*. [volume] (Irasburgh, Vt.), 05 June 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84022548/1857-06-05/ed-1/seq-2/>>; *Union County star and Lewisburg chronicle*. [volume] (Lewisburg, Pa.), 11 Nov. 1859. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038443/1859-11-11/ed-1/seq-1/>>.

¹⁶ *Spirit of Jefferson*. [volume] (Charles Town, Va. [W. Va.]), 02 June 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026788/1857-06-02/ed-1/seq-2/>>; *The independent press*. (Abbeville C.H., S.C.), 25 Sept. 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn93067882/1857-09-25/ed-1/seq-2/>>; *The daily exchange*. [volume] (Baltimore, Md.), 28 Oct. 1858. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83009573/1858-10-28/ed-1/seq-2/>>.

and viewpoints. For my research, I wanted to focus on Walker's time in power and why he decided to legalize slavery. This information was focused within chapter eight entitled, *Walker's Administration*, where I read closely looking for patterns in his writing. I found some very interesting patterns that indicate a very racist view and pro-Southern sentiments regarding the reasoning for these filibustering expeditions. I organized his reasons for the decree of slavery as how this system would benefit Nicaraguans themselves, and how slavery itself was being saved by its own extension.

IV. Historiography

James M. McPherson identifies Walker's filibustering as a shift in strategy for the South's struggle to defend slavery. McPherson argues at the start of the 1850s, some Southerners tried "to defend southern rights by economic diversification." Others like Walker, however, saw a need to turn "the expansion of slavery into a tropical empire controlled by the South".¹⁷ Walker's decree of slavery "succeeded in winning southern support," and this "outpouring of southern sympathy" would help fuel more expeditions to shape this reality.¹⁸ When Walker was arrested by the U.S. Navy for violating neutrality laws on the way to his second venture into Nicaragua, the outcry from Southern politicians was startling. Prominent Southern senator Alexander Stephens supported "the court-martial of the commodore who detained Walker," along with "two dozen southern senators and congressmen" who all saw Walker's actions as justified.¹⁹ McPherson contends many Southern politicians saw Senator John J. Crittenden's proposal to "resolve the secession crisis in 1861 by reinstating the 36° 30' line between slavery

¹⁷ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 115.

¹⁸ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 113; McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 114.

¹⁹ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 114.

and freedom in all territories ‘now held, or hereafter acquired’” as the only realistic way for the current Union to persist.²⁰ McPherson argues the passion “to plant the southern version of liberty as slavery along the Gulf of Mexico” had to take a “back seat” due to growing domestic unrest in Kansas.²¹

Other historians analyze the cultural effects of William Walker’s filibustering on young American men. Unlike McPherson, who centered his analysis on Walker’s impact on the greater political landscape, these historians focus on the impact Walker had on the societal level. In her research, Amy S. Greenberg explores the unique relationship between William Walker’s “character, manliness, and appearance”.²² Greenberg argues there was “a desire among white American men to make a hero of William Walker” and they saw his success as a “character triumphant over both money and appearance”.²³ Greenberg’s use of David Deadrick’s account of filibustering with William Walker reveals “a crisis in antebellum America between character and appearance”.²⁴ In the Antebellum United States, it has traditionally been believed that “strangers looked to the outer man for confirmation of character”.²⁵ According to observers, Walker was “less physically impressive” and struggled to maintain a manly image within the press.²⁶ His supporters pointed out “Walker’s character was revealed through his bravery, honor, and will,” not his appearance or wealth.²⁷ “So many Americans rested their vision of him as a man whose character was proven through action, not appearance”, Greenberg writes.²⁸

However, Greenberg asserts “it was impossible that character could remain invisible” and

²⁰ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 115.

²¹ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 116.

²² Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 676.

²³ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 676.

²⁴ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 675.

²⁵ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 677.

²⁶ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 681.

²⁷ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 693.

²⁸ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 699.

a “description of his gray eyes became a central aspect of accounts”.²⁹ Many newspapers from the North and South became obsessed with his gray eyes and soon “Walker’s eye was the outward sign of his character”.³⁰ Walker himself could not escape this fact. His own newspaper in Nicaragua fabricates “the legend that the indigneous peoples of Nicaragua believed they would be delivered from Spanish oppression by a ‘gray-eyed man’ of the Anglo-Saxon race”.³¹ Greenberg claims the focus on Walker’s eyes by both the media and Walker himself “revealed the victory of appearance in the battle to define character in America”. Greenberg insists Walker may have provided “the opportunity for other men to prove their character,” but he couldn’t escape his own appearance.³² Robert E. May studies another important cultural relationship between filibustering and the U.S. Army. May argues to understand “the army’s place in the story of the filibusters” is to also recognize “the meaning of filibustering to American civilians”.³³ It was the army’s duty to stop these filibusters, as they violated “the Neutrality Act of 1818” and upset European neighbors like France, Spain and the United Kingdom.³⁴ Many army officers gladly carried out the duty to rid themselves of filibusters, which were “an annoyance for troops stationed on the frontier and distracted the army from other duties”.³⁵ However, there was a real appeal for young men to ditch the army for the magnificence of filibustering. May contends “America’s soldiers shared civilian ideologies of Anglo-American racial superiority and Manifest Destiny” and this was the driving force behind young Americans joining filibustering expeditions.³⁶ The Mexican War provided

²⁹ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 697.

³⁰ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 698.

³¹ Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 699.

³² Greenberg, “Gray-Eyed Man”, 699.

³³ Robert E. May, “Young American Males and Filibustering in the Age of Manifest Destiny: The United States Army as a Cultural Mirror,” *The Journal of American History* 78, no. 3 (1991): 862.

³⁴ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 864.

³⁵ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 865.

³⁶ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 875.

“a breeding ground for Manifest Destiny apostles,” especially within the walls of West Point.³⁷ May asserts conflict yields “opportunities for promotion and fame” and the thousands of men who missed out on the glories of Mexico were itching to fight in other territorial wars. Many officers held “expansionist fantasies” and sympathized with filibusters, aiding them with supplies or safe passage to their destinations and even sometimes “joining expeditions”.³⁸ Soon-to-be famous Civil War generals like P.G.T. Beauregard and George McClellan both had a “flirtation with filibustering” with Walker for the chance of glory and expansion.³⁹ May argues “the conquest of America’s native peoples, the ideology of Manifest Destiny, and the taste of foreign conquest cultivated in the Mexican War” drove “young antebellum men” to have a deep obsession and admiration of filibustering.⁴⁰

V. Outline of the Analytical of Heart of the Paper

- Northern and Southern newspapers were extremely divided in how they viewed Walker and what these filibusters’ goals were.
 - Northern newspapers like the *Orleans Independent Standard* describe Walker’s government as a “piratical kingdom, founded on ‘military principles’”.⁴¹
 - The North generally saw Walker’s “piratical expeditions” as unlawful belligerent forays.⁴²
 - Southern newspapers praise Walker for his achievements in Central America.

³⁷ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 876.

³⁸ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 879.

³⁹ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 884.

⁴⁰ May, “Manifest Destiny”, 886.

⁴¹ *Orleans independent standard*. [volume] (Irasburgh, Vt.), 05 June 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84022548/1857-06-05/ed-1/seq-2/>>

⁴² *Union County star and Lewisburg chronicle*. [volume] (Lewisburg, Pa.), 11 Nov. 1859. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038443/1859-11-11/ed-1/seq-1/>>

- These papers highlight Walker and his filibusters as courageous heroes.
The Spirit of Jefferson declares “William Walker is no ordinary man” and Walker’s deeds are “as ambitious as Alexander and as brave as Nelson”.⁴³
- Walker was not a “lawless filibuster” as the North describes, but according to *The Daily Exchange* as a “gentleman so perfectly modest and unambitious”.⁴⁴
- Walker’s decree of slavery validated Northern fears of the South’s “Slaveocracy” trying to seize power.⁴⁵
 - *The New York Herald* illustrates through Nicaragua, the South had created a “scheme for the extension of slavery” throughout Central America and the Caribbean which could generate “ten or fifteen additional slave states”.⁴⁶
 - The North was convinced that Walker’s aim was “to extend the area of human bondage” therefore extending the power of the South and domestically destroying the status quo between the North and South.⁴⁷
 - The *Anti-Slavery Bugle* declared Northerners should oppose this “extension to the end”.⁴⁸

⁴³ *Spirit of Jefferson*. [volume] (Charles Town, Va. [W. Va.]), 02 June 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026788/1857-06-02/ed-1/seq-2/>>

⁴⁴ *The daily exchange*. [volume] (Baltimore, Md.), 28 Oct. 1858. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83009573/1858-10-28/ed-1/seq-2/>>

⁴⁵ *Union County star and Lewisburg chronicle*. [volume] (Lewisburg, Pa.), 11 Nov. 1859. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038443/1859-11-11/ed-1/seq-1/>>

⁴⁶ *The New York herald*. [volume] (New York [N.Y.]), 21 Oct. 1856. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313/1856-10-21/ed-1/seq-4/>>

⁴⁷ *Union County star and Lewisburg chronicle*. [volume] (Lewisburg, Pa.), 11 Nov. 1859. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038443/1859-11-11/ed-1/seq-1/>>

⁴⁸ *Anti-slavery bugle*. [volume] (New-Lisbon, Ohio), 11 April 1857. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83035487/1857-04-11/ed-1/seq-1/>>

- Southern newspapers defended Walker and his filibusters as “philanthropists” exerting their rights to make a life for themselves in Central America.⁴⁹
 - *The Independent Press* writes after “attentively observing the soil, character, and the products of the country,” Walker and his followers concluded the introduction of slavery was “the most effectual means of enabling the White race to establish itself permanently”.
 - To Southerners, Walker was not part of a sinister plot, but was an innocent immigrant trying to establish himself in a foreign country.
 - Walker and his “agricultural missionaries” were “egregiously misunderstood” in “their philanthropic motives” by the Nicaraguans.⁵⁰
- Walker was explicit in his goals: Reestablishing Nicaragua as a slave-labor based nation.
 - Walker viewed the decree of slavery for his government as “the key to its whole policy” of developing “the permanent presence of the white race” in Nicaragua and Central America.⁵¹
 - The unrest and civil strife in Central America in the wake of independence can be attributed to the Spanish leaving their former colonies “too little slavery to preserve their social order” leading to the mixing of races and without the “the purity of races” chaos erupted.⁵²
 - Therefore, Anglo-Americans must dismantle this “bane of the country” through “introduction of negro-slavery” to able to settle in Nicaragua.⁵³

⁴⁹ *The daily exchange. [volume]* (Baltimore, Md.), 28 Oct. 1858. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83009573/1858-10-28/ed-1/seq-2/>>

⁵⁰ *The daily exchange. [volume]* (Baltimore, Md.), 28 Oct. 1858. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83009573/1858-10-28/ed-1/seq-2/>>

⁵¹ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 256.

⁵² Walker, *Nicaragua*, 259.

⁵³ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 261

- Walker's "new social organization" would create a system mirroring Southern society with Anglo-Americans ruling over all other races.⁵⁴
- However, Walker was not wishing to have his newly established country join the United States as many thought.
 - Walker "did not contemplate annexation" to the United States, which he believed "haunted the minds of the public men of the Union".⁵⁵
 - Walker believed if Nicaragua was "to enter the Federal Union," that would undermine "the object of the decree".⁵⁶
 - If Walker's country was to enter the Union as a slave state he would be competing for slave labor with Southern states who were "already complaining about the deficiency of their own supply".⁵⁷
 - The soon-to-be "revival of the African slave-trade" would be the source of Walker's supply of labor not from his cherished Southern brethren.⁵⁸
 - Walker hoped European nations would "perceive permeant advantages from the security and order negro labor" and would see "the true remedy" to the African slave-trade was to "regulate the trade" and "not to abolish" it.⁵⁹
 - Walker envisioned his country would spark the resurgence of the African slave-trade throughout Central America and the Caribbean.
- Walker saw the Union faltering under anti-slavery pressure. In order for Southern rights to survive, slavery must expand outside the United States.

⁵⁴ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 261.

⁵⁵ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 266.

⁵⁶ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 267.

⁵⁷ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 267.

⁵⁸ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 270.

⁵⁹ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 270.

- Walker believed “anti-slavery sentiments” are being “instilled by mothers into the minds of their children from infancy” throughout “the free-labor states,” posing a huge threat to the Southern way of life.⁶⁰
- Walker perceived a new wave of anti-slavery supporters like “the Republican party” and their plan to demolish slavery as “by sap and not by the assault”.⁶¹
 - This devious scheme would never give “another foot of soil to slavery,” sealing its fate to destruction.⁶²
- There was no alternative in order to “strengthen slavery.” Walker and other Southerners must pursue slavery’s “extension beyond the limits of the Union”.⁶³
- Walker viewed his establishment of chattel slavery in Nicaragua as his “sacred duty” to save “Southern civilization”.⁶⁴

VI. Conclusion

The Library of Congress’ *Chronicling America* provided an incredible quantity of material for the debate across the nation over William Walker during the 1850s. To create a full research paper, I would like to delve deeper into finding papers that may differ from the majority sectional opinion. I believe this could bring a better perspective to the issue across the complex political spectrum of the 1850s. I would also search for more firsthand accounts of other filibusters that fought under William Walker. Every filibuster entered Nicaragua for their own personal reasons, and exploring their thoughts and motivations could provide greater insight into why these filibustering expeditions drew the attention of so many young men. I can conclude

⁶⁰ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 265.

⁶¹ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 277.

⁶² Walker, *Nicaragua*, 276.

⁶³ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 277.

⁶⁴ Walker, *Nicaragua*, 265-266; William, *Nicaragua*, 280.

from my research that public opinion was deeply divided along sectional lines on Walker's filibustering. The North viewed Walker as a puppet for the South to expand its political power through conquest of the U.S.' neighbors. The South upheld Walker as an innocent immigrant, only wanting to bring liberty and democracy to less fortunate peoples. However, Walker's own personal memoirs highlight his objectives which contradict the South's defense. Walker and other proponents of slavery saw the creation of the Republican Party and the growing anti-slavery sentiments in the North as a threat to the institution. They believed it was only a matter of time until abolitionists would take over the federal government and destroy slavery. Walker believed he could no longer sit idly by and wait for the North to strip the South of their rights, and that he and other Southerners should seek other means to guarantee slavery's survival. Walker hoped he could create a slave-based commercial empire throughout Central America and the Caribbean, securing slavery's existence well into the future.

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Thinking Like a Historian
Rubric for Research Project framework

Key Elements	Excellent	Solid but improvement needed	Much improvement needed	
Separate title page				
Intro paragraph				
Summary of primary sources				
Discussion of methodological issues				
Three paragraphs on relevant historiography				
Outline of body of paper – bulleted topic sentences plus brief indication of evidence for each				
Conclusion – paragraph with thesis or issues to be considered if you were writing paper up fully				
Citations *				
Writing – polished prose, mechanics sound, effective topic				

sentences etc.				
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- * Appropriately formatted for Chicago Manual of Style.